

This is an official

# CDC Health Update

Distributed via Health Alert Network

August 22, 2008, 19:30 EDT (07:30 PM EDT)

## **Rabies Vaccine Supply is Limited--Update as of August 22, 2008**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been notified by Novartis, maker of RabAvert<sup>®</sup> (Rabies Vaccine), that the supply of human rabies vaccine is being used at a higher rate than expected, which may affect the near-term availability of vaccine for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). This development follows the August 14 news release by Sanofi Pasteur, which announced the unavailability of the IMOVAX<sup>®</sup> vaccine until late September-early October.

Because of limited existing supplies, the CDC strongly recommends that health care providers, state and local public health authorities, animal control officials, and the public take immediate steps to ensure appropriate use of human rabies biologics. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) human rabies prevention recommendations outline animal exposures associated with the risk of rabies (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5703a1.htm>). Judicious and appropriate use of rabies vaccines is crucial to avert a situation in which persons exposed to rabies are put at increased risk due to depleted vaccine supplies.

To ensure that thorough risk assessments are conducted, Novartis is now requiring that health care providers confer with public health officials, and obtain a confirmation code from a state health department before ordering vaccine doses for post-exposure prophylaxis. Confirmation codes will be updated at a frequent interval. These codes should only be released by a state/local health authority that has reviewed the known facts of a given exposure and determined they indicate a sufficient level of exposure risk as outlined in the ACIP human rabies prevention recommendations (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5703a1.htm>).

Public health authorities, health care providers, and veterinarians are encouraged to educate the public regarding precautions to avoid rabies exposure and actions to take if an exposure occurs. These precautions include vaccinating pets and livestock that have close human contact, avoiding stray and wild animals, and safely capturing or detaining biting animals (preferably using animal control officials), or obtaining owner contact information for follow up.

For specific guidance, please see [www.cdc.gov/rabies](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies). Persons with possible rabies exposure should be evaluated as soon as possible by a health care provider. Since PEP is an urgent medical issue but not an emergency, it can be delayed until animal rabies testing or clinical observation is completed. This approach not only limits administration of PEP to persons with confirmed rabies exposure, but it is also cost-saving and conserves limited resources.

Until vaccine supply levels are restored, distribution of vaccine for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PreP) will continue to require approval by state and federal public health authorities. Priority will be given to those individuals with occupational rabies exposure risk (e.g., rabies laboratory workers, animal control officers, veterinary staff, wildlife workers).

Discussions among federal, state, and local public health officials are ongoing to review additional strategies to manage this situation. A national working group has been convened to monitor the ongoing supply situation and provide updated recommendations as the situation evolves.

For more information about rabies and its prevention, and updates regarding vaccine supply, contact your state or local public health official or CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit [www.cdc.gov/rabies](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies).

## DHEC Contact Information for Reportable Diseases and Reporting Requirements

Reporting of animal bites is included in the current DHEC List of Reportable Conditions as an “immediately reportable by phone” condition. Healthcare providers are required to report animal bites to their Regional Public Health Offices, at the contact numbers listed below.

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

### Regional Public Health Offices – 2008

Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.

#### Region 1

##### **Anderson, Oconee**

220 McGee Road  
Anderson, SC 29625  
Phone: (864) 260-4358  
Fax: (864) 260-5623  
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-298-4442

##### **Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda**

1736 S. Main Street  
Greenwood, SC 29646  
Phone: 1-888-218-5475  
Fax: (864) 942-3690  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

#### Region 2

##### **Greenville, Pickens**

PO Box 2507  
200 University Ridge  
Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
Phone: (864) 282-4139  
Fax: (864) 282-4373  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-993-1186

##### **Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union**

PO Box 4217  
151 E. Wood Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217  
Phone: (864) 596-2227, x- 210  
Fax: (864) 596-3443  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-993-1186

#### Region 3

##### **Chester, Lancaster, York**

PO Box 817  
1833 Pageland Highway  
Lancaster, SC 29721  
Phone: (803) 286-9948  
Fax: (803) 286-5418  
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-867-3886

#### Region 3 (continued)

##### **Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland**

2000 Hampton Street  
Columbia, SC 29204  
Phone: (803) 576-2749  
Fax: (803) 576-2993  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-554-9915

#### Region 4

##### **Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter**

PO Box 1628  
105 North Magnolia Street  
Sumter, SC 29150  
Phone: (803) 773-5511  
Fax: (803) 775-9941  
Nights/Weekends: 1-877-831-4647

##### **Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marlboro, Marion**

145 E. Cheves Street  
Florence, SC 29506  
Phone: (843) 661-4830  
Fax: (843) 661-4859  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 660-8145

#### Region 5

##### **Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg**

PO Box 1126  
1550 Carolina Avenue  
Orangeburg, SC 29116  
Phone: (803) 533-7199  
Fax: (803) 533-7134  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 954-8513

##### **Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell**

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: (803) 642-1618  
Fax: (803) 643-8386  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 827-8668 or  
1-800-614-1519

#### Region 6

##### **Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg**

1931 Industrial Park Road  
Conway, SC 29526-5482  
Phone: (843) 915-8804  
Fax: (843) 365-0085  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 381-6710

#### Region 7

##### **Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester**

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600  
N. Charleston, SC 29405  
Phone: (843) 746-3860  
Fax: (843) 746-3851  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

#### Region 8

##### **Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper**

219 S. Lemacks Street  
Walterboro, SC 29488  
Phone: (843) 549-1516, x-214  
Fax: (843) 549-6845  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-614-4698

#### DHEC Bureau of Disease Control Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology

1751 Calhoun Street  
Box 101106  
Columbia, SC 29211  
Phone: (803) 898-0861  
Fax: (803) 898-0897  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902



[www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)

Categories of Health Alert messages:

**Health Alert** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.